

Repair Reporter



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

SPRING 2000

THE "RIGHT STUFF" FOR HIRE

James Brown is the first graduate in an innovative program that provides trained, entry-level automotive repair personnel for the industry, to the mutual benefit of workers, employers, and consumers.

"Employers should know that a well-trained, entry-level automotive repair assistant could be as close as your nearest Smog Check Consumer Assistance and Referee Center," said Doug Laue, Bureau of Automotive Repair Chief.

The Referee Work Experience Program (Program) benefits automotive industry employers by providing trained employees, and it benefits workers by providing training in the automotive field. The Program is intended to provide participants with the knowledge and training necessary to take advantage of new career opportunities in the automotive industry. Having a greater number



First graduate James Brown proudly displays his well-earned repair certificate.

of experienced technicians in the industry ultimately benefits the consumer.

"I was taking automotive classes at Porterville College when I heard about the new training program," said Brown.

In an effort to provide real-world training and experience in the automotive industry, the Bureau of Automotive Repair teamed with the Community College Foundation and the Cal-Works Program to sponsor the Referee Work Experience Program. The Program was launched at the 33 Consumer Assistance and Referee Centers (CAR Centers) in the fall of 1998. Individuals enroll in a program of on-site training by referees in office work, safety, equipment maintenance, vehicle inspection, emissions diagnostics, and supervisory skills. The CAR Centers are vehicle emissions test facilities that provide Smog Check assistance and other services to motorists.

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Updated Version of *Write It Right for Autobody* Pamphlet Available

An updated version of *Write It Right for Autobody* should be available in May 2000 and be posted on the BAR website by the time you read this article.

"It is your responsibility to comply with the Automotive Repair Act," said BAR Chief Doug Laue. "*Write It Right* is a tool you can use to meet that responsibility."

The pamphlet provides information on proper disclosure and documentation, from the initial estimate to the final invoice. The examples have been updated to reflect standard computerized forms used by the industry. It also contains a section on the most often asked questions and answers, and advice on how to handle unusual situations.

The Automotive Repair Act requires autobody and auto repair shops to follow sound business

practices in dealing with customers. These practices can be summed up in four rules:

- ◆ Keep the customer informed.
- ◆ Do only work that has been authorized.
- ◆ Keep a written record of all work.
- ◆ Give copies of work orders and invoices to the customer.

The information contained in this booklet should be used in conjunction with the Laws and Regulations Relating to Automotive Repair Dealers, Licensed Official Stations, and Licensed Smog Check Stations.

To obtain a free copy, visit the BAR website at www.smogcheck.ca.gov, or call our toll-free hotline at (800) 952-5210, or write us at the following address: Department of Consumer Affairs Publications, 401 S Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95814-6200. ■

AUTOBODY LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

Senator Jackie Speier introduced Senate Bill 1988 in February 2000 to enact the Anti-Auto Theft and Insurance Fraud Act of 2000. The bill provides that auto theft, autobody repair fraud, and other forms of auto insurance fraud, including staged accidents, cause great economic harm and personal suffering to the people of California.

Among other things, the bill would implement an autobody repair inspection pilot program. The Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) would be required to inspect a specified number of insured vehicles that have undergone autobody repairs to determine whether autobody fraud was committed, and to determine what measures should be taken to prevent autobody fraud. If enacted, the bill would appropriate \$200,000 from the General Fund and mandate completion of the

project by December 31, 2002, with a report due to the Legislature by February 1, 2003. The bill was passed out of the Senate Insurance Committee and the Senate Committee on Public Safety. The bill is scheduled to be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 15th.

The bill also provides for other anti-fraud measures, including increasing penalties against physicians, chiropractors and attorneys for engaging runners, cappers, steerers, or other persons to procure patients or clients.

In an October 1999 report to the Senate Insurance Committee, the California Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair submitted strategies for combating autobody fraud and ensuring the safety of reconstructed salvage vehicles. Fraudulent repair schemes cost California consumers an estimated

\$500 million annually. The report was intended to assist the Committee in determining the proper course of action regarding possible future regulation of the autobody repair industry. ■

The following legislation relating to autobody is also being tracked by BAR. If you would like further information on any of the bills, contact the legislator or visit www.leginfo.ca.gov.

- ◆ Assembly Bill 1778 (Lowenthal) would provide greater disclosure of the use of various types of crash parts.
- ◆ Assembly Bill 2729 (Wesson) would prohibit tow truck drivers from soliciting business for automotive repair shops at the scene of an accident.

Fine-Tuning Continues on Proposed Air Conditioning Regulations

Hearings to receive comments on proposed air conditioning regulations were held on January 10 in Sacramento and January 13 in Riverside.

"The participation by industry and government in developing these regulations has been ongoing, and we were gratified to see that the hearings were very well attended," noted BAR Field Manager Ken Wardlow. "We feel confident that any resulting regulations will work for the consumer, industry, and environment."

The regulations are designed to provide consistency in the service, diagnosis and repair of automotive air conditioning systems. In addition, minimum equipment requirements would be instituted for shops that provide air conditioning service and/or repair.

The comments received at the hearings are being researched and addressed in

accordance with state laws governing administrative regulations and rulemaking (California Government Code sections 11340-11359). Revised draft regulations are expected in the near future. BAR must follow these procedures before the proposed regulations become effective. The hearings were the first step in the process. The next step is to publicly notice the revised regulations by mailing them to all parties that participated and requested to be notified, which also includes posting them on the BAR website at www.smogcheck.ca.gov. By law, 15 days will be provided for parties to provide additional comments.

To be placed on the "interested parties" mailing list for future regulation notices, or to receive a copy of the proposed revised regulations, please contact the BAR's Executive Office at (916) 255-4565. ■

In Memoriam: John Grow

BAR Chief, 1983 – 1987

Former Bureau of Automotive Repair Chief John Grow peacefully passed away on Tuesday, April 4, 2000.

In 1983, then-Governor George Deukmejian appointed Grow as Chief of the Bureau of Automotive Repair, where he served until 1987. During his time as chief, Grow oversaw implementation of the state's first Smog Check Program.

Memorial contributions may be made to Works in New Directions — a center for homeless teenagers, 300 Ahern Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, or to the Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. ■

Disciplinary Actions

5 Star Service—Glendale
Rudy Courtade, Owner

Order: ARD registration revoked, stayed, and respondent placed on 3 years' probation under the following terms and conditions: ARD suspended for 10 days; shall post sign indicating dates and reason for suspension; obey laws and regulations; report to BAR on prescribed schedule; report any financial interest in any other automotive repair business; provide BAR representatives unrestricted access to inspect all vehicles; retain parts for at least 60 days; reimburse BAR \$10,000 cost of investigation. (09/30/99)

A & D Auto Body Shop—Long Beach
Stephen Chickey, Owner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (12/07/99)

AAA Transmission—Visalia
Robert Dishman, Partner
Donna Dishman, Partner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (10/12/99)

Auto Body Depot—Cottonwood
Lee Roy Schwartz, Jr., Owner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (11/26/99)

B Line Body Shop, Inc.—San Jose
James Suggs, President
Order: ARD registration revoked, stayed, and placed on 3 years' probation under the following terms and conditions: obey laws and regulations; ARD registration suspended for 2 days; shall post sign indicating dates and reason for suspension; report quarterly to BAR; report any financial interest in any other automotive repair business; provide BAR representatives unrestricted access to inspect all vehicles; reimburse BAR \$5,000 for cost of investigation and enforcement. (10/12/99)

Blake's Automotive—Chico
Elaine Niles, Owner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated, Smog Check Station license revoked. (11/26/99)

Budget Transmission—Northridge
Shlomo Shomer, Partner
Eli Shneimann, Partner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (1/12/00)

Century Collision Center—San Jose
Ali Paknahal, Owner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (01/11/00)

Chuck's Auto Service—Hawthorne
Charles Echmalian, Owner
Kirkor Arslanoglu, Adjuster
Order: ARD registration revoked, Official Brake Station license revoked, Official Lamp Station license revoked, and Lamp & Brake Adjuster license revoked. (01/11/00)

Crown Transmission—North Hollywood
Eung Sung Kim, Owner
Order: ARD registration permanently revoked. (10/12/99)

Econo Lube N Tune—La Mesa
James Carson Barger, Owner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (11/26/99)

G & M Automotive—Mount Shasta
Gary Wayne Hall, Partner/Adjuster
Marita Hall, Partner
Order: Brake Station license and Brake Adjuster license revoked, stayed, and placed on 3 years' probation under the following terms and conditions: obey laws and regulations; report quarterly to BAR; report any financial interest in other automotive repair business; provide BAR representatives unrestricted access to all vehicles. (11/25/99)

Kameel's Auto Body & Paint—San Diego
Kameel Fakhoury, Owner
Order: ARD registration revoked. (10/04/99)

Lim Associates, Inc., dba City Service—San Francisco
Edward C. Lim, President/Adjuster
Order: Official Lamp Station and Official Brake Station licenses revoked, Lamp Adjuster license, Brake Adjuster license revoked; pay \$5,000 to BAR for cost of investigation. (10/04/99)

Luxury Auto Center—Los Angeles
Boris Usherenko, Owner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (01/12/00)

Magic Auto Body & Paint, Inc.—Los Angeles
Rita Syssoeva, President

Order: ARD registration revoked; respondent directed to pay \$20,343.60 for cost of investigation and enforcement. (10/20/99)

Molino Enterprises, Inc., dba JM Enterprises—Pittsburg
James Rico Molino, President
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (01/11/00)

Motor Tech Performance—Stockton
Erwin Juane Marinas, Partner
Gretchen Marie Ella, Partner
Order: ARD registration revoked. (11/26/99)

Natalie's Honest Engines—Fremont
Marc Shishido, Partner
Natalie Shishido, Partner
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (01/12/00)

Purrfect Auto Service #40—Chatsworth
Teresa C. Brown, President
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated, and Smog Check Station license revoked. (01/12/00)

Purrfect Auto Service #74—Corona
Abdinasir M. Yahye, Owner
Order: ARD registration revoked. (01/11/00)

Purrfect Auto Service #120—Rolling Hills Estates
Shamsuddin S. Ali, President
Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (01/12/00)

Rho's Auto Repair—Wilmington
James Myong Hwan Rho, Owner/Adjuster
Order: The order relates to the listed registration and licenses of respondent (ARD registration, Official Lamp Station license, Official Brake Station license, Lamp Adjuster license, and Brake Adjuster license). The registration and licenses are revoked. However, the revocation is stayed and the registration and licenses are placed on probation for a period of 3 years under the following terms and conditions: registration and licenses suspended for 10 days; obey laws and regulations; shall post sign indicating dates and reason for suspension; report to BAR on prescribed schedule; report any

Disciplinary Actions (continued)

financial interest in any other automotive repair business; provide BAR representatives unrestricted access to inspect all vehicles; reimburse the BAR \$11,726.19 for cost of investigation and prosecution. (10/04/99)

Ron's Mobile Equipment & Repair—Marysville

Ronald Prochaska, Owner

Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (01/11/00)

Royal Fortune, Inc., dba South Pasadena Auto Body—South Pasadena

Nick Eftekhari, President

Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (12/20/99)

Ruben's Body Shop—Oakland

Jose L. Tavares, Owner

Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (01/12/00)

Safcar Corporation, dba Exclusive Collision Center—Los Angeles

Ben Gabayan, President

Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (01/12/00)

Select Auto Center—Los Angeles

Edward Piralyan, Owner

Order: ARD registration revoked. BAR incurred \$3,873.85 in costs for the investigation and prosecution of this matter. Respondent must reimburse BAR for its investigative and prosecutorial costs prior to the granting of any petition for reinstatement of the license. Respondent is not responsible for reimbursing these costs except as a condition of the reinstatement of the license. (10/10/99)

Skyway Garage—Paradise

Jefferson Lee Arino, Owner

Order: ARD registration revoked. (10/04/99)

Speedee Oil Change & Tune-Up—

West Los Angeles

JoAnn Hudspeth, President RJ Corp.
Order: ARD registration revoked. (10/12/99)

Toyo Pros—Riverside

Dino Marquez, Partner

Jill Marquez, Partner

Order: ARD registration revoked. (10/12/99)

Transmission World—Fresno

Robert Dishman, Partner

Donna Dishman, Partner

Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated. (10/12/99)

Ty Van Chau—Los Angeles

Order: The application of respondent Ty Van Chau for licensure as a Brake and Lamp Adjuster denied. (11/19/99)

Universal Collision Center—

Los Angeles

Paul Louis Pipkin, Owner

Order: ARD registration revoked. (11/26/99)

US Transmission—Los Angeles

Ki Nam Han, Owner

Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated, stayed, and respondent placed on 3 years' probation under the following terms and conditions: obey laws and regulations; ARD registration suspended for 3 days; shall post sign indicating dates and reason for suspension; report to BAR on prescribed schedule; report any financial interest in any other automotive repair business; provide BAR representatives unrestricted access to inspect all vehicles; submit advertising to BAR 30 days prior to use; pay investigative costs of \$3,000. (11/25/99)

West Best Auto Center—

Diamond Bar

Bijan Zohour, Owner

Order: ARD registration permanently invalidated; pay \$30,000 cost of investigation and prosecution to BAR. (11/18/99)

Young's Automotive—Panorama City

Boyd Jamieson Young, aka James

Young, Owner

Order: ARD registration revoked, stayed, and placed on 3 years' probation under the following terms and conditions: obey laws and regulations, ARD registration suspended for 5 days; shall post sign indicating dates and reason for suspension; report quarterly to BAR; report any financial interest in any other automotive repair business; tag and retain replaced parts for 60 days; submit printed forms and advertising to BAR 30 days prior to their use; reimburse BAR investigative cost of \$8,494. (10/11/99) ■

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS FOR SMOG CHECK REPAIRS

The BAR's Enforcement Division conducted 657 investigations involving unlicensed automotive repair practices last fiscal year. It may surprise you to learn that more than 10% of these investigations were due to unlicensed Smog Check activities. Some automotive repair facilities are unaware that the law prohibits them from performing Smog Check repairs without a Smog Check license.

Violations can lead to severe penalties. For example, penalties ranging as high as \$2,500 can be imposed for each incident of unlicensed activity or, for the more severe cases, criminal charges can be brought about by the local district attorney's office.

Section 44032 of the Health & Safety Code requires stations and technicians to be licensed to perform Smog Check repairs. This includes any emissions-related repairs that are a result of a Smog Check inspection. All automotive repair dealers can perform general automotive repair work, as long as the work is not requested because of a failed Smog Check inspection.

Registered automotive repair dealers interested in becoming a licensed Smog Check Test-Only station or Test-and-Repair station should contact the Department of Consumer Affairs' toll-free line at (800) 952-5210. Sections 3340.10 through 3340.16.5 of the California Code of Regulations describe the application process and various equipment requirements. ■

RIGHT STUFF *(continued from page 1)*

"The Referee Work Experience Program seemed like a good idea whose time had come," said Laue. "The industry needed to improve recruitment, and workers needed some training to get that first job in the automotive field."

Brown is currently employed in the automotive repair field. "I love my job," he said. "I help with engine repair, brakes, and realignment. I work with good people—if you don't need it, we don't recommend it," he added enthusiastically.

Besides James Brown, five other participants have now graduated from the Program—two have been employed by CAR Centers as student lane technicians, and two are seeking employment in the automotive field through leads provided by the Foundation. Ten more participants are in various stages of the 400-hour course, with participation increasing as communities learn more about the Program.

"Hiring a Program participant makes good business sense," added Laue. "Our graduates have shown their strong desire to enter the field by completing an intensive training program. They're already trained, so they can add value to your business as soon as they're on the job."

This 400-hour, hands-on training program consists of five 40-hour modules and 200 hours of mentoring. Each module builds upon the prior lessons, and participants must pass a final quiz at the end of each module. After completing the first five modules, the participants begin a mentoring program in which they train incoming participants.

"This Program was not about just reading books, but actually doing the job," added Brown. "It was the perfect way for me to learn. I've worked in the automotive industry before, and I thought I knew a lot about cars. But now, I understand so much more about engines and emission control systems."

"This was a good program, and a good experience," he said.

Before being admitted to the Program, participants must show that they possess the ability to read, write, interpret, and understand basic records and correspondence, as well as apply practical mathematics, make simple calculations, and apply basic problem-solving methods.

The objective of the Program is to provide participants with the knowledge and training necessary to achieve their financial goals and to take

advantage of many new career opportunities. Some of the possible career paths include General Office Assistant, Auto Technician Apprentice, Auto Parts Assistant, or General Auto Repair Assistant. With additional training at a community college and/or with additional work experience, possible career opportunities expand to include Smog Check Intern Technician, Basic Area Technician, or Advanced Emission Specialist Technician.

"I've liked working on cars since I was a kid and still love working on them," explained Brown. "If I can have a career working on them, that's great!" His goals include taking a Clean Air Car Course at college so he can reach his goal of becoming a Smog Check technician.

For more information about this Program or on how to hire a Program participant, contact Rebecca R. Dirk or Patrick Chand, Community College Foundation, at (916) 418-5200. ■



Brake and Lamp Adjuster Exams to Resume in June

The Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) finished developing new licensing exams for Brake Adjusters and Lamp Adjusters. Exporior Assessments will begin administering the exams in mid-June 2000.

Initial license applicants who are waiting for an examination date will receive eligibility notification, a Candidate Handbook, and scheduling instructions during May.



Currently, the BAR renews existing adjuster licenses based on previous examination performance. Effective July 1, 2000, applicants for adjuster license renewal will have to pass the applicable examination.

Adjuster license applications can be downloaded from the BAR website, picked up at BAR field offices, or requested by calling (800) 952-5210. ■



State of California
Gray Davis, Governor

Department of Consumer Affairs
Kathleen Hamilton, Director

Bureau of Automotive Repair
Douglas E. Laue, Chief
10240 Systems Parkway
Sacramento, CA 95827

BAR FIELD OFFICE PHONE NUMBERS

Bakersfield (661) 833-6304
Canoga Park (818) 596-4400
Culver City (310) 410-0024
Fresno (559) 445-5015
Fullerton (714) 680-7851
Oceanside (760) 439-0942
Richmond (510) 243-9410
Riverside (909) 782-4250
Sacramento (916) 255-4200
San Jose (408) 277-1860
South El Monte (626) 575-6934

DCA Cashiering (916) 322-7002
DCA Licensing (916) 322-4010

Consumer Assistance and
Referee Center (800) 622-7733

DCA HOTLINE (800) 952-5210

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REPAIR REPORTER

SPRING 2000

ATTEND A SMOG CHECK TEST-ONLY INFORMATION MEETING

The Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) has scheduled four information meetings on the Test-Only network and opportunities available. The meetings will be held in Merced, Modesto, Stockton, and Vacaville during May and June 2000 and are open to anyone interested in the Test-Only component of the Smog Check Program. The locations, dates, and times of the meetings are listed below.

May 24, 2000—Vacaville

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Courtyard by Marriott
120 Nut Tree Parkway
Vacaville, California

May 31, 2000—Stockton

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Radisson Hotel
2323 Grand Canal Blvd.
Stockton, California

June 7, 2000—Modesto

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Doubletree Hotel
1150 9th Street
Modesto, California

June 21, 2000—Merced

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Jalapeno's Restaurant
1500 West 13th Street
Merced, California

For more information, please contact Rocky Carlisle, BAR Engineering, at (916) 255-4360.

Visit DCA/BAR's website: www.smogcheck.ca.gov